

(Mr. OXLEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, let me first say to my friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and to all of the participants in this historic debate how much I appreciate their leadership and their ability to debate this issue in a very courteous and effective manner.

One hundred thirty-eight Members of this House were present back when we debated the original Gulf resolution. Those of us who were here at the time, including myself, remember that as one of the historic times in this Chamber. We return today in many ways to debate some of the very same issues we debated so many years ago.

All of us, I think, feel a tremendous sense of honor to have an opportunity to debate these issues before us. But ultimately the substitute offered by my friend from South Carolina fails to put us in a position to be as effective as we were back in 1991. Indeed, it probably takes us a step backward.

If you look at the U.N. resolutions, 16 resolutions ultimately in that language, there is the ability of the world to go after Saddam without another U.N. resolution, without another resolution passed by the Congress. Yet the President came to the leadership of our body and requested that the Congress give this kind of authority. That is exactly what our leadership did.

My hat is off to the Speaker and to the minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), for coming together and putting together a bipartisan resolution that should be supported.

This is a serious matter, that Saddam Hussein has continued to resist our efforts. Let us reject this substitute, pass the underlying resolution, stand firm, as we did back some 11 years ago, and send a signal that the United States and our allies will perform adequately.

□ 1115

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

(Mr. LIPINSKI asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Spratt alternative resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Congressman SPRATT's alternative to this resolution authorizing military force against Iraq. First of all, I would like to say that there is no question that Saddam Hussein is evil personified. He is Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin rolled into one reprehensible dictator. This world would no doubt be a better place without him.

But this record of cruelty does not give a lawful reason to attack Iraq without proof that their activities pose an imminent threat to the security of the United States. So I must ask: Why must we pass this resolution now? I still have not received a clear, convincing answer to that question.

I have asked it, and many other questions of those who support this resolution, including the Secretary of State. They have failed to make an effective case as to why Congress should authorize a historic shift in policy from containment and deterrence to that of preemptive attacks.

As far as I know Saddam Hussein has committed no new evil acts, since President Bush was sworn into office almost two years ago. Why didn't the President ask for this resolution at that time? During his campaign, President Bush himself said that the United States should not be the "world's policeman." Why the shift in policy? When the President first started talking about using military force against Iraq, it was said that Saddam Hussein was linked with September 11th, but then British and U.S. intelligence revealed that wasn't true. Also, when the President first started talking about removing Saddam Hussein, he claimed that he had the authority to do so under a 1998 resolution. However, now we are here considering the authorization of military forces at the President's request. Furthermore, the President was prepared to go it alone, and then he decided to ask for the support of as many allies as possible, including the United Nations. These are just some examples of the mixed messages from the Administration. The President's approach to the Iraq situation has had numerous changes in a short span of time.

Due to the President's disjointed approach, the lack of answers to many questions that various colleagues and I have, and the fact that containment of Saddam Hussein has worked for the past decade, I cannot support this resolution.

I have tried very hard to support the President and this resolution because I believe the President is sincere and truly thinks that military force is the only way to deal with Saddam Hussein. Perhaps he is right, but I cannot in good conscience support military force until we first seek U.N. weapons inspections and the support of the international community. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Congressman SPRATT's substitute resolution.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds to respond to the arguments made on the other side. First, they claim that this bill somehow, even though there is not a word in it, supplants Public Law 102-1, which has the authority to go after terrorists, which is not true, and then they say that we are wrong in saying to the President, we do not want to dilute the focus on terrorism; we want you to certify to us that if we go to war in Iraq, it will in no way impair our first priority, and that is to get al Qaeda. We have to decide which way we want to go.

We say, that is still the law of the land, 102-1. We backed it then, we support it now, and we want to make al Qaeda our first priority.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES), a Vietnam veteran and a member of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I rise this morning in strong support of this substitute. As I said yesterday,

many of us know that there is a better way, and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) has focused our efforts with his leadership and with his guidance. He has led the way to a carefully constructed and well thought out resolution, one that takes into account the dynamic and the potentially dangerous situation in which we find ourselves today.

Unilateral action, Mr. Speaker, would cost billions of dollars and possibly thousands of lives. Carelessly stepping into a conflict is not something that should be undertaken lightly. I do not think that the administration, as I said yesterday, has made the case for this type of action. This appropriate resolution supports the President's request of the Security Council for arms inspections that is backed by force. This resolution authorizes President Bush to use the same Armed Forces of the United States as his father did in the Persian Gulf War in military action that is sanctioned by the Security Council. If the Iraqis defy the inspectors and the U.N. will not authorize force, this Congress will expedite a vote for a new resolution to authorize that force.

Saddam Hussein and his regime are a menace to our security, and I agree with the President that the Security Council should enforce resolutions and put a stop to his system of "cheat and retreat." The Security Council should compel Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and its means of producing such weapons, and if armed force is necessary, it should be with their concurrence as well.

This bill sets the stage for a prudent process to accomplish these objectives. More importantly, it emphasizes the tenet that war should be a last resort and not a first resort.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

Let us remember those words, and as I hear this debate they come back to me: "Gentlemen may cry 'peace,' 'peace,' but there is no peace. The war has actually begun."

Those are the words, of course, of Patrick Henry, who spurred on our people to fight for their liberty and fight for our country's security. And when all is said and done, America's security and our freedom is in the hands of our people. We do not choose to put the future of this country and the security of this country into the hands of the United Nations. As we debate this amendment, which again puts even more responsibility in the hands of the United Nations, let us take a brutal look at that organization and what this amendment accomplishes.

This amendment requires the United States to have the permission of the Communist Chinese and gangsters of other regimes to do what is necessary